THE EMIGRANTS;

OR,

THE ISLAND OF ESMERALDA.

BY THE AUTHOR OF

'ATLANTIS.'

1879.

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THE EMIGRANTS.

CHAPTER I.

THE ISLAND OF ESMERALDA.

In the broad Atlantic Ocean, three days' sail from Madeira, there is a beautiful island belonging to the Portuguese.

This island is the gem of the Atlantic. It is very small, being only fifteen miles in circumference.

On its southern side, there is a small bay and sandy beach, affording shelter and safe mooring for innumerable fishing and pleasure boats.

The town is picturesquely situated on the hill, which rises abruptly from the shore.

The island is covered with vineyards, gardens, and orange-groves.

The northern coast rises to the height of five hundred yards, presenting to the spectator a line of cliffs, which appear like a gigantic fortification, in consequence of the cliffs being perforated with caverns of different sizes,—the largest of which, the central one, being one hundred yards high, one hundred yards broad, and two hundred yards long. The entrance to this cavern is twenty feet high and sixty

feet broad. It is one hundred yards above high-water mark. A coral reef, which stretches out to sea for miles, is partially uncovered during high tides.

At the time when this narrative begins, the year 1835, the coral island was covered with sea birds. A few cocoanut-trees were visible at the northern side of the island, near the cliffs, but no inhabitants were to be seen; the caverns, however, contained six young people, who showed most undeniable marks of vitality, as we shall presently see when we look into the large cavern.

Inside the large cavern is seen a wooden cottage, built like one of the model cottages which gain prizes at exhibitions. It contained a dining-room, a drawing-room, a kitchen, a pantry, and three bedrooms.

The cottage was beautifully furnished. The walls of the dining-room were hung with prints and drawings. The drawing-room contained a large pianoforte, sofas, armchairs, bookcases filled with books on all subjects. In one corner of the drawing-room was an immense iron chest, filled with dollars and sovereigns.

Seated at a large mahogany table, on which were bottles of the choicest wines of France, preserved fruits, and sweetmeats, are seen as well as heard, a most uproarious party of young people, dressed in the most fantastic garments, each different from the other, as if they had been chosen from the four quarters of the globe.

At the foot of the table sat the eldest of the party, whom they dignified with the name of Captain George. He was a young man of the age of twenty-five, tall and thin, with light-coloured hair, light and scanty moustache, whiskers cut off close to the ears, light-blue eyes, very meek

and nervous, longish nose, rather thick lips, delicate complexion, and a languid air, like a man who had lately recovered from a severe illness.

At the head of the table sat a young girl of the age of fourteen, having a long face, long pointed nose, small mouth, very brilliant eyes, dark complexion, and raven-black hair. A stranger would have pronounced her to be Spanish. She was Welsh—born at Aberystwith. Her name was Lucy Llewellyn. Her sisters called her 'Queen Mab,' from her stately walk and sober demeanour.

On her right hand sat her two sisters, Gertrude and Beatrice, one twelve and the other nine years of age; differing, in appearance and character, from their eldest sister, as much as could be well imagined. They had long, yellow hair, light complexions; they were of a lively and joyous temperament,—too much so at times, for they were always giggling.

On her left hand sat her two cousins, Jack and Bill Lloyd, eleven and ten years of age. They were small for their age, but strong-built, having round heads, crowned with a mat of curly black hair.

Captain George rises up and calls for attention. His efforts to obtain silence were ineffectual, until Queen Mab, in a solemn and sonorous voice, cried, 'Order! order! The Captain is going to make a speech.'

A death-like silence ensues.

'Ladies and gentlemen.' (Hear, hear.)

'Silence, if you please,' says Queen Mab.

'To-day is the birth-day of King William. I propose that we drink his health.' (Uproarious applause.) 'Charge your glasses.'

The King's health, three times three,—nine times nine, is drunk, with acclamation. All sat down and burst into an immoderate fit of laughter.

Who are these young people? How did they come to this coral island? There is no vessel upon the shore. There is no harbour. A small fishing-boat and an elegantly built light cart are all that is seen.

CHAPTER II.

OUTWARD BOUND.

ONE lovely evening, on the 1st of April, 1835, the pier of Falmouth was crowded with people, assembled to witness the departure, for Australia, of the emigrant schooner *Queen of the Isles*, 150 tons burden,—too small a vessel for carrying a large cargo, but sufficiently large for the convenience and comfort of emigrants for whom it was fitted up by Captain Sydney. There were on board a library, pianoforte, dressing-rooms, bath-rooms, and a billiard-table.

Captain Sydney was a middle-aged man, very large and corpulent. He had a red face, red hair, fiery red whiskers. His eyes were light blue. They were sunk so deep in his head, that when he laughed—which was not an uncommon occurrence—they disappeared almost entirely. He wore a blue coat, blue trousers, and yellow waistcoat, which display of colours made the wags of Plymouth designate him by the name of the 'Walking Rainbow.'

The mate was a tall, thin man, having a cadaverous-looking face. He was a native of New York. He seldom spoke to anybody on board. He was considered by the Captain to be a first-rate navigator.

Dr. O'Shea was a native of Killarney, a dapper little man, not much over five feet high. He was a great mimic and a first-rate actor. The part he generally performed

was that of a lady. He was devotedly fond of chemistry. His chief amusement on board was playing practical jokes upon the passengers and sailors, and frightening people when in harbour, by the exhibition of giants walking at night, with flaming swords and helmets; imitating thunder and lightning, earthquakes, volcanoes, and making ghosts walk up and down the quay at midnight, with an insolent, *nonchalant* air, as if they thought it had been built for their special convenience.

The sailors were all Welsh,—a noisy, irritable lot, always wrangling but never coming to blows, as their Celtic brethren at the other side of the Channel would have done.

The passengers on board were, Captain and Mrs. Llewellyn and their three daughters, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd and their two sons, and a young man, an invalid, whom they were to leave at Madeira, to whom we have been already introduced, under the name of 'Captain George.'

The emigrants before the mast had been tenants of, or in the employment of, the Llewellyns and Lloyds.

Captain Llewellyn was thirty-five years of age, a small, light-built man, having dark features and black hair, large black eyes, a hooked nose, small mouth, which, when he smiled, showed a row of pearly teeth. He had distinguished himself by capturing slavers on the Gold Coast when in command of His Majesty's brig *Firefly*. His wife was very tall. She had a stately walk, like a tragedy queen. When she spoke, she expressed herself in long, Johnstonian phrases. Her features were so dark that everyone supposed that she was a foreigner; even when she spoke the illusion was not dissipated; for she had an impediment in her speech and a

slight lisp, which induced people to suppose that she was speaking a foreign language. The politeness of strangers was a constant source of vexation to her; they invariably answered her in French, Italian, or Spanish.

Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd were cousins of the Llewellyns, natives of Aberdovey, in Wales. Mrs. Lloyd was a Miss W. W. Wynne. She had no fortune at her marriage except her genealogical tree, which went as far back as Adam, some said farther, but that is only traditional lore. There was nothing at all remarkable in the Lloyds; they were such people as one sees every day.

The cause of the emigration of the two families was pecuniary losses, occasioned by the failure of mines in Cornwall.

A fair wind brought them quickly within sight of the Scilly Islands, where they were becalmed for three days. At the expiration of which time a light breeze sprang up from the N.N. East.

'What do you think of the weather, Captain Sydney?' says Captain Llewellyn, as they paced up and down the quarter-deck smoking their cigars, very much out of sorts from the three days' delay.

'I think,' says Captain Sydney, 'that we shall pay for this calm before long. I fully expect a stormy passage to Madeira.'

'Why so?' says Captain Llewellyn.

'I have observed that mild winters and wet springs are usually followed by stormy summers.'

'So have I,' says Captain Llewellyn; 'but the weather is as little to be relied upon as that fickle goddess, Fortune, who has played me such a scurvy trick.'

'We shall see presently,' says Captain Sydney. 'By

Jove! here it comes with a vengeance! Pipe all hands on deck to take in sail. We shall have a set-up before long, which will astonish those young creatures who are laughing and giggling there. Down to the cabin, children, as fast as you can run. You'll have long faces to show presently, and very pale ones, I'll warrant you.'

Under double-reefed topsails the *Queen of the Isles* flew before the wind. On the evening of the sixth day she cast anchor in the Tagus. They spent two weeks at Lisbon. The captain laid in a supply of fresh meat, vegetables, fruits, and wine. The children spent their time in bathing, boating, and learning Portuguese.

On the 20th of April, they weighed anchor. A north wind blew gently the whole time, until they came within sight of Madeira. The sea was so smooth that they felt as if they were in a canal boat. During this time the young people and the Doctor used to amuse themselves by acting plays, trying experiments in chemistry, building up on the deck a small wooden house which had carried off the prize at the emigrant exhibition at Plymouth, also a small cart and a boat, both of which were packed up in boxes; the latter could be put together in a very short time, and made water-tight by indiarubber bands. They used to let down the boat over the side of the vessel, during light winds and make excursions, fishing and rowing.

They had a great variety of agricultural instruments on board, the use of which was explained to the children by Captain Llewellyn. The boys had been taught carpenter's work at home. They taught the girls on board; telling them that they should be obliged to make use of their hands when they arrived at their settlements.

The wind dropped just as they came in sight of Madeira; then another calm ensued, which the captains said was the prelude to a storm. Nor were they mistaken in their conjecture; for the following morning found the *Queen of the Isles* scudding before the wind under bare poles.

For several days they saw neither sun nor stars. The hatches were clued down. No one showed on deck, except the man at the wheel and a sailor on the look-out. On the morning of the fourth day, about an hour before daybreak, the two captains came on deck.

'Where on earth, or rather on sea, have we drifted to?' inquired Captain Llewellyn.

'I calculate by dead reckoning,' replied Captain Sydney, 'that we are about three days' sail south of Madeira.'

'Breakers ahoy!' sung out the man on the look-out.

'Breakers, you blessed fool!' said Captain Sydney; 'who ever heard of breakers in the middle of the Atlantic?'

'Breakers it is, sir!' sang out again the look-out.

Down he fell, head over heels upon the deck, and so did the man at the wheel, and so did the two captains, and so did everybody in the cabin. Was there not a shout and a scream below? Such a noise of broken glasses, and tables upset. What was the cause of all this confusion? The vessel had struck upon a coral reef!

Up they all ran on deck, but soon beat a retreat when they saw a huge wave rolling towards them. Down it came with a crash on the deck, and the next moment the vessel was raised off the rock, and shot forward like an arrow from a bow and precipitated upon an opening between two coral reefs, and there it stuck fast.

CHAPTER III.

THE STORM —THE WRECK.

It was an hour before daybreak, when the last wave left the vessel fixed in the coral reef nearly at high-water mark. The tide was now on the turn, and the sea became sufficiently calm to let down the two boats. In the first boat, which was the larger one, the captain put provisions for a week, and sails for making a tent, all the passengers of the fore-cabin, and one half of the crew. In the second boat he put the remainder of the crew and the passengers of the stern-cabin. When the children and Captain George were on the point of stepping into the boat, a huge wave carried her away. The captain called out to Captain George to take care of the children until the first boat returned for them, to give them breakfast and keep them well wrapped up.

'We are going to land on the lea-side of the island; you shan't have long to wait: there is no danger, as the tide is going out.'

Having breakfasted, we went on deck. The sun was just rising above the horizon. The sea had gone down considerably; there were only three feet of water at the side of the vessel, so I proposed to carry them on shore on my back, which feat being accomplished, we ran up to the caverns. At each side of the large cavern were two smaller

ones, at sight of which the boys were in an ecstasy of delight.

'We shall all have houses; how jolly it will be!'

We scrambled up the cliff, expecting to see the first boat coming back for us, instead of which, we saw both boats four miles out at sea. To run back for a telescope and flagstaff was the work of a few minutes. We hoisted the flag and looked through the telescope. The signal was answered. We could see by their open mouths that they were cheering.

'Where are they rowing to, Captain George?' says Jack.

'They are trying to row to shore; but the tide is running so strong, and the wind is so dead against them, that I fear they can't make way against it.'

At this moment a clap of thunder was heard. The wind increased in violence. The boats waved their flags as much as to say good-bye, then hoisted sail, and flew before the wind like sea-birds.

'They are lost, Captain George!' exclaimed the children in one voice.

'There is no danger to apprehend,' I replied. 'Those boats could live in any sea; besides, they have provisions on board for a week, which on short allowance would be sufficient for a fortnight, before which time they are certain to be picked up by some vessel going to India or Australia.'

We returned to our vessel, which we found on dry land.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' says I, 'we may have to remain here for a long time, consequently it is necessary that strict discipline should be kept on board or on shore. I wish you to promise to obey my orders, as your captain.'

To this proposition the boys gave a ready assent. The girls, however, shook their heads; the light-haired ones fell into incontrollable fits of laughter.

'Obey you, Captain George,' they exclaimed, 'that we won't!'

'If you don't obey me,' I replied, 'you must obey my first lieutenant.'

'Who is your first lieutenant?'

'Queen Mab.'

'Agreed!' they all said. 'We will obey Queen Mab, Queen of the Coral Island, Queen of Esmeralda!'

Having arranged this knotty point to the general consent of the crew, I issued my orders.

'1st. Let the girls bring up all the clothes, bedding, and light furniture on deck.

'2nd. Let the boys bring up the cart, and put it together on the beach.

'3rd. Let the boat be left above high-water mark.

'4th. Bring up the house and leave it above high-water mark.'

'Are you mad, Captain George?' exclaimed the children in chorus. 'Do you think you have a whole boat's crew under your orders? How can we do all that?'

'I don't suppose you can do it as quickly as you would say Jack Robinson,' I replied. 'I will haul up the things from the hold by the assistance of the windlass, and then hoist them overboard. You can put them on the cart; we will then harness ourselves to the cart (a six-horse or rather donkey cart), and you will see what short work we shall make of it. It is not more than ten yards to high-water mark: so look lively, lads and lasses.'

When once begun it was not such a difficult matter to achieve, the boys having practised it on board; consequently in two hours we had the materials for building the boat and the house, safe beyond all danger of being carried away by the tide.

'Now then, lieutenant, blow the whistle!'

Queen Mab sounded the boatswain's whistle to call all hands on deck.

'What the dickens are you blowing the boatswain's whistle for?' inquires Jack.

'To let the crew know that I have prepared for you a champagne déjeuné.'

'There will be no mutiny on board when such are your orders,' says Jack, which opinion was received with general acclamation.

We adjourned to the cabin, to partake of a little refreshment. When the déjeuné was finished, I suggested that this might be the last déjeuné we should ever enjoy. This opinion was received with groans, and other signs of disapprobation.

'On board, I mean.'

'That alters the case,' says Queen Mab.

'That it may not be the last in reality,' I continued, 'we must convey provisions to the cavern, before the tide at eight o'clock this evening carries away (as it possibly might) the vessel, and all that it contains.'

'What are your orders, Captain George?'

'First and foremost, the crew under your command (the Petticoat Government) must bring on deck all the champagne.'

This proposition was received with general acclamation.

'The soda-water, pale ale, Guiness stout, and the wine in the steward's room.'

'All right, Captain,' say the boys; 'but what shall we have to eat?'

Boys are always hungry.

'Bring up on deck all the meat you can find, preserved fruits and biscuits. I shall hand the things overboard with assistance of the windlass. You shall put them on the cart; which, being done, we shall harness ourselves as before, and draw them above water-mark.'

After the lapse of two hours the work was accomplished. The crew complained of fatigue; so we adjourned to the cavern, lay down, and fell fast asleep.

At two o'clock I awoke, feeling refreshed, and ready for more exertion. I did not awaken the crew. I wondered how much work they had done, considering their age, and how many hours it would have taken them to accomplish it, had it been given to them as a task to perform. I brought up from the vessel, the fishing-tackle and the nets, the remainder of the bedding, and a few tables and chairs, which, being done, I took a hammer and nails, and repaired the breach in the side of the vessel. Having moored her to a rock above high water-mark, I sat down to think what was next to be done.

The sea was bowling in at an awful pace, and the storm was rising. Dense, black clouds appeared in the horizon, and thunder pealed in the distance. We are in for another storm, thought I, worse than the last. I wonder if the vessel will weather the gale. Here she is, poor thing! rocking from side to side, as if she were a living being awaiting her approaching dissolution. What can be the

matter with the poor *Queen?* Oh! it is those confounded masts. What a fool I was not to think of that before! It is now almost too late. There is no harm, however, in trying. Whereupon, running back to the cavern, I roused up the boys.

'Come along, lads, with your saws and hatchets; there is not a moment to be lost! The vessel will go to pieces this night, if we don't cut down the masts!'

To work we went with a will, and overboard they went, and were soon fastened to a rock above high water-mark. It was a lucky thought; had we not done so, the vessel would have gone to pieces that night, to a moral certainty, and all our casks of claret, and burgundy, sherry, and madeira, would have been lost for ever.

When we returned to the cavern, we found Queen Mab and her crew awake, and complaining of hunger. We kindled a fire, and had such a blow-out! My eyes! did I ever see young people eat as they did? One would have thought that they had not tasted food for a twelve-month!

After dinner, feeling tired and sleepy, we came to the conclusion, unanimously, that the finest county in England is Bedfordshire. Whereupon, leaving Queen Mab and her sisters in undisputed possession of the large cavern, the boys choosing the one at the left, while I selected that on the right; in a few minutes, we were all far away in dream-land.

The storm raged terrifically that night, wasting its fury in vain against the *Queen of the Isles;* but none of the sleepers heard it. The sun was high up in the heavens next morning before we awoke. How we cheered when we

went down to the old ship's side, to find her uninjured by the storm.

'In a few days,' says Captain George, 'the *Queen* will be on dry land at high tide, and will remain so for a fortnight, *i.e.*, until the next spring-tide; consequently we have not much time to lose. We must have not only everything inside the vessel carried above high water-mark, but also all the timber anchored on shore; to accomplish which, in so short a time, the vessel must be broken up.'

'How is that to be done?' inquired Jack. 'Shall we blow her up with gunpowder?'

'We should waste the most valuable article we possess,' replied Captain George. 'Do you know what a ram is?'

This question was answered by a peal of laughter.

'A battering-ram, I mean,' says Captain George, rather put out by their hilarity.

Another peal of laughter was the response.

'Order! order!' cries Queen Mab.

'Order it is, sir,' was the reply, followed by another peal of laughter.

'Captain George,' says Jack, 'I know what a battering-ram is. I have read an account of it in the histories of Greece and Rome. They employed them for knocking holes in walls, and breaking open gates; but we have not one here.'

'It is a pleasure,' says the Captain, a little mollified, 'to have a sensible man to speak to. We must make a battering-ram.'

'How can we do that, Captain?'

'Nothing in the world is more easy; we have the two masts of the schooner, besides the bowsprit. The two masts

are to be fixed firmly in the sand, close to the side of the vessel. The bowspirit is then to be hung between them. The bowsprit being swung backwards and forwards, will come with a bang against the side of the vessel, and I warrant you that you shall have her in pieces in less than no time.'

This plan was received with unanimous applause, and the following Monday was the day appointed to put it into execution.

It succeeded to admiration. The vessel was completely knocked to pieces. The barrels of wine rolled out on the shore. The strand was strewed over with implements of husbandry, patent ploughs, threshing-machines, and everything required for emigrants. Before the next high tide, we had carried above high water-mark, by help of the windlass and cart, the contents of the vessel.

To stow away everything in the caverns, required a very long time, and very hard labour; which, being accomplished, we built up the wooden house inside the cavern, and furnished it to admiration. We now turned our attention to the island, which we resolved to lionise on the following Monday. Queen Mab and the girls were in favour of going by land. The boys and I were in favour of going by water.

We drew lots. Mab lost. We won. Hurrah!

CHAPTER IV.

THE ISLAND OF ESMERALDA.

EARLY on Monday morning we set sail in our little boat, carrying with us provisions and fishing-tackle. Ten hours were spent very delightfully, coasting round the island, landing here and there, and dining on shore.

The island presented nothing remarkable, or interesting. It was covered with booby birds, which were so tame that they let us go up and shake hands with them. I told the boys not to frighten them on any account, for if our provisions ran short, we could have boobies instead of geese at Michaelmas. We gave them food, which pleased them so much that they followed us down to the beach in thousands, to the infinite amusement of the light-haired girls, who never ceased to laugh the whole way home, and to talk of those darling birds.

On the following morning we determined to examine the centre of the island, in hopes of finding a spring of water, for the water in the barrels was beginning to get foul. When that supply became exhausted, we should be obliged to distil sea-water, as we used to see the doctor do, on board, from his little still. This method would be very troublesome, as we should be obliged to keep it agoing night and day, which would be an awful bore.

When we had scrambled up to the top of the cliffs, we saw in the distance a clump of cocoanut-trees.

'Let us go there,' says Queen Mab; 'where there are trees there must be water.'

'I fear,' says Captain George, 'that we shall find no spring there, although there be plenty of water below, which has drained through from the surface. However, let us go and see.'

I was right in my conjecture: we could find no spring. The young people looked much disappointed, for they were dying of thirst, and had been looking forward with great anxiety to having a drink of cool spring-water.

'How very unfortunate,' they said; 'we wish we had never come to this horrid island.'

'Don't make yourselves unhappy about it,' says I; 'we shall dig a well. The water cannot be many feet below the surface.'

This opinion gave them new life and spirits; so back we scampered as fast as we could run for spades. After digging for a couple of hours, and finding not the slightest trace of moisture in the ground, we threw down our spades in despair.

'What is to be done, Captain George?' inquired Jack.

'Do you remember, Jack, to have seen amongst your father's tools a long, hollow iron cylinder, pointed at one end?'

'I do,' replied Jack.

'Do you know the use of it?'

'No.'

'It is for boring Artesian wells. The French have used them in Algiers, and astonished the natives by finding water in the desert, where no wells ever existed.'

'We will make an Artesian well,' says Jack, 'to-morrow

morning. I'll get up at four o'clock and have a search for the borer, and if I find it we will make an early start of it.'

According to agreement, we were dressed and ready to start at four o'clock, bringing breakfast with us. We were a long time screwing the cylinder into the ground. We became so fatigued and wearied that we were on the point of giving it up in despair, when a jet of water suddenly burst up through the hollow cylinder, several feet above the ground. Deafening were the cheers that this occurrence produced.

'Now we shall have plenty of fresh water!' we exclaimed. 'Let us run for empty barrels.'

The supply of water appeared to be inexhaustible. We not only filled all the empty barrels, but were able to pour the water out of the full casks and fill them with fresh water.

'I vote,' says Queen Mab, 'that we come and live here in the dry season. In the wet season we can inhabit the cavern.' This proposition was put to the vote and carried unanimously.

During the next month we were very busy, building a wooden house under the cocoanut-trees. Being all expert carpenters, and having nothing else to do, we finished our house in two months. It was not so difficult a performance as it appeared to be at first sight. The great difficulty was to haul the planks of the vessel over the cliff. This we performed by means of the windlass fixed upon the top of the cliff.

When our house was finished, we looked at it with admiration. It had a beautiful verandah, a large drawing-room, a dining-room, billiard-room, and bath-room; bedrooms

and dressing-rooms for the ladies, on the right wing; the same for the boys and myself on the left wing. We built a large room to put our model ploughs, and other implements of husbandry, in, and to stow away our seeds, &c.

The grounds around the house were equally divided, as also were the seeds, so that every one could please themselves, whether they preferred to cultivate a garden, to sow corn, or to plant fruit-trees. In cultivating the ground, I helped the girls; the boys paddled their own canoe. The supply of water never failed. We irrigated the whole country round, and planted quite a forest of cocoanut-trees.

Not content with doing so much, we bored Artesian wells in other parts of the island. We planted there cocoanut and other trees; so that in a few months we had converted a wild, barren, rocky island, into one of the most beautiful islands in the Atlantic Ocean.

The effect of this transformation had nearly proved fatal to us. So long as it was a barren rock, it remained unnoticed. As soon, however, as it became a conspicuous object, by being covered with cocoanut and fruit trees, it was certain to be observed by the first canoe full of savages that might accidentally pass by.

The rainy season was fast approaching; so, bidding farewell to our farm and ornamental gardens, we retired into our winter quarters,—the house in the cavern.

CHAPTER V.

THE NIGHT ATTACK—THE REPULSE—THE SURPRISE.

Our labours are now all over. We have returned to our cottage in the cavern, and have resumed our daily occupations. At four o'clock, two hours before sunrise, the large bell is rung outside the cavern. We jump out of bed. We throw on our loose bathing-dresses, which we purchased at Lisbon. We rush frantically into the water, swim about until we are tired, and come home to dress. When the red streaks along the horizon give intimation of approaching day, the bell rings again. Queen Mab makes the tea, and prepares to read family prayers, waiting until the sun rising above the horizon peeps in at us, as if wondering what we are all about.

After breakfast, the girls practise music and drawing. They are first-rate artists; they have a portfolio full of sketches, illustrating our adventures since we left England; they are moreover first-rate musicians, and sing very well. The boys know a little of music, and have very fair voices, so that our musical parties in the evening are by no means contemptible.

The boys and I do carpenter's work, mend the nets, go out fishing, set hooks along the shore when the tide is full out, and make ourselves generally useful.

At twelve o'clock the bell rings for dinner. We have fish, fresh out of the sea, preserved meats, champagne, and

pale ale. After dinner, preserved fruits, biscuits, claret, burgundy, port, and madeira, coffee, and liqueurs. We then take the siesta for two hours, according to the fashion of the Portuguese, which we learned at Lisbon. From two o'clock until sunset we spend our time as we feel inclined. Some read, others play chess, backgammon, or billiards. At sunset we have tea and coffee, after which we go out to take a stroll along the sea-shore. Sometimes we tell stories, at other times we take a sail or a row by moonlight. At eight o'clock the bell rings. We come home to a light supper: something hot with preserved fruits and one half-pint of champagne each, after which the ladies go to bed. The boys and I take a turn along the beach to smoke our cigars, and then turn in.

'Suppose we have theatricals to-morrow, by way of a change,' says Queen Mab. 'We are becoming as regular in our habits as old maids.'

'What play shall we act?' inquires Captain George.

'Ask the boys, Captain George.'

'What play, boys?'

'Giant,' they both said.

This play was written by the Doctor. It was our favourite play; it afforded endless amusement to the sailors on board. The giant was twenty feet high. He had a huge head, covered with a forest of black hair, awfully large eyes, which rolled fearfully in their sockets. He was accompanied by a dwarf; the Doctor acted the part of dwarf to admiration. The eyes were made to roll by a person behind pulling a string. Brass tubes and a bellows were hung behind him; the blowing the bellows produced the most fearful sounds imaginable, something between the

roar of a lion, the bellowing of a bull, and the braying of an ass.

His presence was ushered in by the shaking of a large sheet of iron, imitating the sound of thunder, and by the fall of shot from a height upon an iron plate, imitating the sound of hail. Lightning was represented by the Doctor's large electrical machine. The giant did not appear alone on the stage (the dwarf I count for nothing); he came accompanied by a party of furies, breathing flames from their mouths and nostrils. These parts were generally performed by the girls, sometimes by the sailors.

Everything was arranged for the performance, which was to take place to-morrow evening. It did take place, but in a different manner from what we could have foreseen. The boys had gone out fishing after dinner. They had gone a long way out to sea, when to their consternation they beheld on the horizon a black spot, which, seen through the telescope, was a large canoe, filled with Indians.

Great was our dismay on receiving this intelligence. What was to be done? In case that they were friendly Indians, should we receive them with hospitality? The boys said, 'Of course,' the girls said, 'No; we don't like Indians, dirty black men.'

'What says Captain George?' inquires Jack.

'I have great faith in woman's wit. Ask Queen Mab.'

Queen Mab, being called upon to give an opinion, put her head upon her shoulder, a habit which she had acquired of doing when thinking intently on any subject.

'My opinion,' says Queen Mab, 'is, that if they are friendly Indians they will do us no personal injury, but they will steal all our property. If, on the contrary, they

be not friendly, they will put us all to death. The best and wisest course to follow should be to frighten them away.'

'That is easier said than done,' exclaimed the boys. 'What says Captain George?'

'My opinion is, that we had better make the Giant who is going to act to-night fight for us; if that plan fails, we must fight ourselves.'

This opinion met with general approbation. The Giant was brought forward in front of the cavern. Shot was placed on the top of a ladder, at the foot of which was a sheet of iron. The girls were dressed as furies. The electrical machine was put in order; wires were arranged connecting the electrical machine with the boat, which was filled with brass nobs, arranged in such a manner that whoever touched them should receive an electrical shock. The magic lantern was placed, so that any figure required by the circumstances of the case could be projected upon the sail of the boat. The cannon was charged with salt, to give them the idea of a hail-storm.

Matters being so arranged, we waited with intense anxiety the approach of the Indians. When they came near shore an hour after sunset, we could see that the canoe contained twenty men armed with bows and arrows. The moment the canoe touched the shore I gave the word.

'Show them sailors in the boat.'

The figure of five sailors drawing ropes was shown on the sail. A fearful yell, and a discharge of arrows from the savages.

'Draw the slide.'

The picture vanishes. The Indians leapt on shore,

yelling fearfully. They rush in a body to the boat; the moment they touch it they start back, receiving a shock from the electrical machine. Before they can recover from their surprise, the thunder and lightning are exhibited, then the hail-storm, and finally the Giant stalks forth, with flaming eyeballs and roaring like a demon. Terrified and overwhelmed, they seem uncertain what to do. Now the furies dash out at them, throwing flames of fire from their mouths and eyes. This was the turning-point. Screaming with terror, they leaped frantically into the canoe, and rowed away for their lives. We drew a deep sigh of relief when we saw them disappear in the darkness.

'Will they come back again, Captain George?' inquired Jack.

'You may rely upon it that they will not, nor will any Indians ever come near this island again. I should like to hear the story they will tell of this night's adventure.'

'How shall we spend Christmas Eve?' says Queen Mab.

'Telling stories,' say the boys. 'Let Mab begin with a ghost story.'

The Ghost of Loftus Castle.

The story is told by the Rev. George Loftus Reade.

'Shortly after being ordained, I was invited to pay a visit to my uncle at Loftus Castle. The Castle was full of company. All the bed-rooms were occupied, except one, which had not been slept in for a long time. I was given my choice, either to go to the hotel, or to run the chance of

catching cold if I slept in the Haunted Chamber. I had never heard of its being haunted, and if I had, should not have cared a fig, as I did not believe in ghosts.

'No sooner was I in bed, than I heard the rustling of a silk dress outside the door. The door opened, and a lady, dressed in the costume of three centuries back, walked into the room. She smiled upon me most sweetly, passing so close to the bed, that I could see her dress turn over as she glided past and entered the dressing-room. I followed her, and to my surprise, saw no one in the dressing-room, from whence there was no exit. Fancying that it was an optical delusion, I returned to bed, and fell asleep. Next morning I had no recollection of it, until I was asked at breakfast if I had seen anything strange.

'"Oh, yes!" I said, "you have been playing a practical joke upon me. You shan't succeed a second time."

'On the following night I took a novel to bed with me, to keep me awake. I had no sooner opened the book than I heard the rustling of the silk gown. Laying down the book I prepared for a spring. The moment she had passed the bed, I sprang forward, and clasped her in my arms, exclaiming, "Now I have you!" My arms passed through her body and came bang against my sides. She glided on, and passed into the dressing-room.

'I have been a believer in ghosts ever since.

'This lady had been an ancestor who had been confined in that room all her life, being insane, and was buried in the ground beneath the dressing-room.

'My father once told her story to some guests after a late dinner. One of his guests said that he did not believe

in ghosts, and would undertake to lay it. Up he went to the bedroom with a brace of pistols.

'They had not long to wait the result of the experiment. Hearing the discharge of fire-arms they all rushed up to the bedroom, where they found the sceptic in a great state of excitement.

'"Have you laid the ghost?"

'"She is the devil!"

'"Who?"

'"The ghost! I had no sooner laid down on the bed, than in came a lady in court dress. 'Who are you? Speak, or I'll shoot you?' No reply. I fired at her. The ball went right through her body. She took no notice. She walked to the dressing-room and disappeared. There was nobody there. Where, thought I, can she have gone to? Up the chimney, of course. I fired the other pistol up the chimney."

'An agent came from London, an Englishman, a tall, powerfully-built man, with iron nerves.

'"He never believed in ghosts, not he. He would not be frightened by a whole legion of them."

'The first night she pulled the clothes off his bed. The second night she pulled him out of bed. The third night, oh, no! not for the Bank of England would he sleep there a third night.

'The Haunted Room has been turned into a boudoir, and the ghost has not been seen since.'

'Whose turn comes next?'

'Captain George's.'

Skating in Holland in the year 18—.

Hurrah! There they go. Thousands flying over the slippery ice, like birds on the wing. Some going across country straight to Amsterdam, steering by the windmills; others to the Hague. What a glorious sight! a bright sun shining above, a keen, frosty wind, bracing the nerves; the sound of innumerable skates on the ice, and the deep lowing of the water beneath, producing an exhilaration and buoyancy of spirits, which once felt can never be forgotten.

'Hullo! Hunderd tausend tunnen teifeln,' sounds in our ears, as if the voices came from the clouds. Turning round, we see a sixty-ton brig bearing right down upon us. What to do, not having our skates on, we were at a loss, and therefore did what most people in our situation would have done,—nothing.

The brig sailed past us, crowded with passengers, some laughing at our looks of astonishment, others raising their hats with mock civility. Away we ran to the hotel, engaged a guide who could skate, to bring us to the Hague, snatched a hasty repast, paid the bill, and away to the Hague.

When did this happen, you inquire? During the Murphy period, an era remarkable for long winters of severe frost.

Who has not heard of Murphy (of weather-almanack notoriety) and his wager to drive a carriage and four across the Serpentine on the 13th of February?

The bet was made at a time when the wind blew from the S.W., accompanied by torrents of rain, all vestiges of snow and ice having disappeared. On the 10th of February the wind blew fresh from the east. A slight coating of ice covered the Serpentine. On the 11th a gale of wind blew from the same quarter, and all London was on the ice. Such ice! clear as crystal, without a crack or a flaw, without a particle of snow. The wind, however, was so high, that figure-skating was confined to Kensington, under the shelter of the bridge. Elsewhere you had only to spread open your cloak and fly before the storm. On the 13th, the day of the wager, the day of weather prophecy, the crowd that assembled on the banks of the Serpentine to see Murphy drive his four-in-hand had never been equalled before.

It was about this time the London Skating Club was formed. Coleman, of the Haymarket, having made the improved skates now universally adopted; the old-fashioned skates, turned up at the toe, with a brass knob at the end, having been the cause of many severe accidents.

'Shall we go to Holland next year?' said I to my brother one evening, while talking about Murphy's bet.

'By all means let us go next year.'

On the 1st of January, 18—, we left London for Rotterdam, at 10 a.m. The cold all day was intense. To sleep at night was impossible. At day-break we rushed upon deck, hearing a sound like chains drawn over stones, which we supposed meant that we were arrived at Rotterdam. How great was our disappointment to find that, instead of seeing Rotterdam, no land was in sight, but around us was a floating island of thin ice, through which we were ploughing our way very slowly. The captain was

much perplexed. To go to Rotterdam was impossible. To Helvoetsluys barely so. To the Hague, *i.e.* Scheveningen, where there is always open sea, appeared to be the only alternative; but inasmuch as all the passengers were bound for Rotterdam, he yielded to their solicitations to try Helvoetsluys.

We arrived there just in time; one hour later we should have been caught in the ice. After a short delay at the Custom-house, we drove in the omnibus to the river, where we embarked in a long boat. The river was covered with floating ice, to pass which was a matter of uncertainty; for should our boat freeze into the floating ice, when half-way across, we should have been carried down-stream, nobody could tell whither. To prevent this casualty, the following method was adopted by the steersman:

'When I say "Hobbledy," lean all to one side; when I say "Hoy," lean all to the other side.'

By following his directions, we kept the boat see-sawing from side to side, which effectually prevented it from freezing to the ice. An omnibus awaited us on the other side. Before dark we arrived at Rotterdam Hôtel des Pays Bas.

We started in the afternoon rather too late, I am sorry to say, for much time had been wasted in having our Dutch skates screwed on to our boots.

The Dutch have no screws on the heel of their skates, and only one strap binds the foot to the skate. To move upon skates so arranged, without several days' practice, is next to impossible. There are two reasons for this arrangement. One is, that when skating across country, on

what is called field-ice, you are obliged to take off your skates at the end of every field, in order to scramble over the embankment. The other reason is, that when you are going best pace, should you strike a stone frozen into the ice, you might break your leg. But inasmuch as we were not able to go best pace, nor any pace at all, without the screws, we had no alternative left us but to put on the screws.

'True,' you say, 'but you had English skates; why did you not put them on?' On the field ice you have not the smooth ice of the Serpentine; on the contrary, you must go over sticks and stones, and all suchlike impediments. Hence the necessity of wearing very long, unsightly-looking skates, which we in England, from our ignorance, have condemned as antiquated and barbarous.

We are off at last. The cold is intense. Our guide looks anxiously at a few clouds floating above. Shaking his head, he says,—

'We shall not reach the Hague to-night.'

'Why so?'

'The wind has changed to the west; in two hours it will rain.'

'Impossible!' we exclaim; 'so soon?'

His prognostication turned out to be too true. We had no alternative but to go on, having sent our luggage by diligence to the Hague.

The whole country was alive with skaters. Tents were erected at short distances, where you could dine, smoke, play billiards, &c. Farther on in the distance there were horse-racing and other amusements, this day being a holiday. Every day, indeed, during the Christmas is more or less a holiday with the Dutch. The poor they employ

sweeping the ice. No people in the world are so charitable as the Dutch, and nowhere do you see so few beggars.

Crowds were passing to and fro from Rotterdam to Delft.

'I say, guide, can't we get out of the crowd? We shall certainly trip somebody up.'

'All right, sir; follow me to the lake. It is not much of a round. It is the direct road to Amsterdam.'

Beautiful smooth ice! Large parties of ladies and gentlemen fly past us like flocks of birds, all in a line, keeping step, and going like the wind.

'Where are they bound for?'

'Amsterdam. They will be there in two hours.'

Having crossed the lake, we come again upon the field ice.

'Beware of the windmills,' says the guide.

'The windmills!' we exclaim. 'Is the man mad? The windmills are not moving.'

'The ice near the windmill is very unsafe, and the water very deep. Accidents continually happen from people going too close, tempted by the smooth ice.'

'Now, gentlemen, we must cut across country to meet the omnibus. The ice is becoming unsafe.'

Clouds were collecting, and a rapid thaw had set in.

We enter a watercourse, with high banks on each side, scarcely wide enough for two people to skate abreast. On turning a corner, we hear the sound of skates. Two men going best pace come straight at us. They had not seen us. There was no time to get out of their way. A collision appeared inevitable, when, to our astonishment, they leaped into the air, then gave another leap and stood still, hats in hand, motioning to us to pass.

We had now reached the highroad. We skated along the ditch by the side of the road, and met the omnibus.

The Dutch omnibuses are very comfortable. Arm-chairs in rows of three, all looking towards the horses. The centre arm-chairs turn over to one side, to allow one to pass.

Everybody was smoking small sweet cigars, very mild and fragrant. They looked very happy, and seemed to be enjoying themselves thoroughly.

Hôtel Bellevue very comfortable. The stoves had open fire-places—a great improvement upon those ugly iron stoves which consume the air and give headaches. Sent back our guide. Snow falling in heavy flakes.

Next day we went to the Palace gardens with our English skates. Had two hours of tolerable skating. The garden was crowded with old men and little children. The old men took long sweeps on the outside edge; some holding their arms crossed over their chests, their eyes being half-closed, others smoking long meerschaum pipes.

Our small club skates excited a great deal of interest. 'This was the first time,' they said, 'they had ever seen Englishmen skating in Holland. They supposed that they preferred to eat their roast beef and plum-pudding at home.'

I ran a race with a young girl of thirteen years of age. Tumbled head over heels, to the great delight of the juvenile skaters, who picked me up amidst shouts of laughter.

Feeling rather crest-fallen, I proposed to my brother that we should retire from the field, which we did, not covered with glory, but with a considerable amount of snow. We took the night diligence to Amsterdam, Hôtel Doulen.

Heavy snow fell during the following week. We whiled away the time, sight-seeing, reading books, and going to the theatre. At length the snow ceased falling, followed by an intense frost, so severe that in one night the ice on the canal in front of the hotel was six inches thick.

'To-morrow,' says the landlord, 'you shall be able to skate upon the Grand Canal. They have sent all the idle hands to clear away the snow, and in a few days I hope you shall see real skating on the Eye.'

Crossing the Zuyder Zee to the Grand Canal, although the distance is short, the fatigue was very great, the ice being in such a wretched condition,—nothing, in fact, but lumps of melted snow, congealed, which had been carried down the river and consolidated by the hard night's frost. To walk across was easy enough. We had not come to Holland to walk. To be able to say that we had actually skated upon the sea, was something to boast of.

The canal had been broken up by barges on one side. On that side the ice was tolerably good.

A family of peasants carrying baskets pass us. Let us have a race and see at what rate they travel. Nine miles an hour, measured by the mile-stones. They swing along with an awkward, ungainly step. They pass us. We put on a spurt,—pass them, and fall. They stop to pick us up. Brock and Saardam appear like villages of the dead,—not a living thing to be seen. We felt as if we were ghosts, flitting along the narrow canals, under the overhanging windmills.

The next day's excursion was to Haarlem lake. The lake was so covered with snow that we dared not venture far; far enough, however, to say, 'We have skated on a lake which once was and now is no more.'

'To-day,' says the landlord, 'I shall send my son with you to show you skating on the Eye. He is at the University.'

The snow had been swept to each side of the river. In the centre was beautiful black, slippery ice. The wind was so high, we were prevented from going to Nimeguen, thirty miles from Amsterdam. How far we went, I don't remember. It was hard work struggling against the wind. Coming back, however, we flew; not fast enough, however, not to be overtaken by a long line of sportsmen, having their guns slung on their backs, going express railway speed, shouting as loud as they could to the people to keep out of their way.

We had several delightful days' skating on the Eye, and were able to use the Friesland skates without screws.

On the 28th of January, my brother's leave of absence having expired, we left Amsterdam with regret. The night before, there had been a thaw, which rendered the Haarlem Canal unsafe. The landlord advised us not to start early. We had also a delay at the bank, which prevented our departure before midday—a most providential circumstance, for when we approached the first bridge, we were stopped by people shouting, 'Unsafe! unsafe!' On inquiring the cause, we were told that a man had been drowned, skating under the bridge at 9 a.m., the hour we should otherwise have been there. The ice on the canal, for the remainder of the journey, *i.e.*, to Haarlem and Leyden, was splendid, and quite safe under the bridges.

At Leyden we took the diligence to Rotterdam—snow having begun to fall heavily, and thence by diligence to Antwerp; from Antwerp, train to Ostend, steamer to London.

'Who next?'

'Jack.'

'I don't know any stories.'

'No matter,' says Queen Mab; 'tell one of your uncle's stories.'

A Gallop by Night, from Gibraltar to Ronda.

Having been detained in Madrid for three weeks, in consequence of the diligences having been stopped by a celebrated brigand, José Maria by name, I felt an intense curiosity to know something about him.

In Madrid, I could obtain no satisfactory information. All sorts of extraordinary stories were in circulation, not one of which had the slightest foundation in fact.

One word about the bull-fight, before leaving Madrid. The folding-doors are thrown open. Out rushes an enormous jet-black bull. He looks round in astonishment, bewildered at seeing so many faces. Everybody rises and cheers the bull. This proceeding seems to flatter his vanity. This ovation, he thinks, has been made in his favour. The public has at last recognised his merits. He is soon, however, disenchanted of this delusion, receiving a deadly insult from a boy daring to wave a flag in his face, and before he could find time to reply to the insult, disappearing like a vision of the night.

Looking round to see upon whom he could vent his indignation. He observes in the distance a cavalier dressed in ancient armour—not of steel but of leather, mounted upon an old horse of high Andalusian blood, which once had seen better days. He charges the horse and gallops on, not deigning to cast a look upon the brave cavalier sprawling in the dust.

Another horse and rider appear on the arena. They are treated in the same way. Again, another,—as many as nine!

The whole amphitheatre rises as one man, and cheers. Cheers upon cheers, loud and long, waving of shawls and handkerchiefs. The spectators seem to have bid good-bye to their senses. A tall, active young man, bearing a flag, steps forward. He waves it in the bull's eyes. The bull charges,—overtakes him when on the point of vaulting over the parapet, throws him high in the air, receiving him on his descent on one horn, which pierces through his body. The young man is carried away dead.

Loud cries are heard on all sides for the matador. He presents himself to King Ferdinand, bows and retires.

The bull looks round with astonishment at finding no one upon whom he could vent his fury, until he spies the matador. 'At last,' thinks he, 'I have found a warrior worthy of my sword.'

The matador, holding in his right hand a toledo blade, stands quiet and collected, waving with his left hand a red flag.

'That is an insult,' thinks the bull, 'which I cannot let pass by unnoticed.' He charges and throws up the red flag in the air. The matador makes a lunge and misses his aim. Cheers for the bull and groans for the matador. 'Turn him out! Away with him!'

Had this happened in the time of the Romans, the cry would have been, 'Death to the matador!'

'Montes! Montes!' they cry. Forth comes the renowned Montes, with the gait of an emperor. He marches up to the royal box, salutes, retires, and takes up his position.

The bull looks at him and seems to say to himself, 'What a bore! It is not worth my while to notice him.' After a while he alters his mind and charges. Montes does not raise his sword. He looks the bull straight in the face. The bull stops suddenly, as if he had been shot, turns tail and runs.

The amphitheatre has gone mad. Bedlam let loose could not have roared and screamed like that.

The bull now recovers from the sudden panic, and, as if he felt ashamed that such a noble creature as himself should have shown signs of fear for a single moment, he makes a desperate charge. Montes holds his toledo blade between two fingers, raises it above his head, and when the bull bends his head, throws it like a javelin. The point enters the spine. The bull drops down dead.

Imagine the effect upon the spectators already wound up to the highest pitch of excitement!

At last the welcome intelligence arrives that the roads are open. José Maria and his band of forty men have become loyal subjects.

The diligence to Seville had been engaged by a Catalonian family, except one place in the coupé, reserved for me. They all spoke English. The bride had been educated in the convent at Kensington. They were particularly partial to anyone who hailed from the Emerald Isle. The lady and her cousin who occupied the coupé had been married in Barcelona, by royal proxy, an ancient custom amongst those who belonged to the royal family of Catalonia.

The diligence used to stop for a few hours at night to allow us to rest, eat ices, and walk about. To sleep in the month of July was out of the question.

At Val de Peñas, the vintage that year had been so

plentiful that they poured on the ground the contents of a previous year. We washed our hands in wine instead of water,—the latter being scarce and dear.

The vines grow along the ground like strawberries. They take no trouble to trail them on poles, as in France, or hang them on trees, as in Italy. Val de Peñas is a burgundy wine drank everywhere throughout Spain.

The diligence stopped near Seville. A middle-aged, small, active, red-faced, good-humoured-looking man rushes up to the coupé, and receives in his arms his affianced bride. A dinner-party, toasts, but not many speeches.

Having procured a guide and two Andalusian horses I left Gibraltar at sunset.

The Andalusian horses are small. They climb hills like cats; they can endure any amount of fatigue, and are as gentle as lambs. Having crossed the neutral ground we came to the custom-house.

'Have you any cigars in your carpet-bag?' inquired the guide.

'Lots.'

'They are contraband.'

'Never mind.'

'Give me two pisettas and the bag, and ride on.'

'Corriente,' says I, riding on.

The guide had been a contrabandista; the custom-house officer had followed that honourable profession. They fraternised. 'Cosas d'Ispania.'

Darkness soon succeeds sunset in Spain. We enter a wood. A tall man leaps upon the path in front of me; I rein in my horse; he looks alarmed, and dashes into the wood. The guide bursts out into a loud ringing laugh.

'What are you laughing at?'

'He mistook you for a brigand—probably for José Maria himself.'

'What! Do you know José Maria?'

'Don't I just! Caramba! he and I were once sworn friends.'

'You were one of his gang, then?'

'I knew them all, and a finer set of fellows never lived on earth.'

'How did you make their acquaintance?'

'You must know, señor, that I have been a contrabandista. You start. I swear by the Holy Virgin that a more honourable company of men never lived, that is, so long as we were prosperous; but when bad times came, what could we do? It was no fault of ours; we had no alternative but to take to the road or starve. We robbed the rich, and gave alms to the poor; confessed our sins, and promised never to do it again. The priest said we were bad boys, gave us absolution, and with a clear conscience we——'

'You did the same over again?'

'Ah, señor, don't say that. We did not, for we had a run of good luck, and we are all now honourable men, living upon our wits.'

'In your opinion, then, José Maria is an angel.'

'It is a bad world, señor, that we live in, where everything goes by comparison. José Maria never robbed a poor man. He was beloved by the poor. He often travelled all over Spain alone, when a price was set upon his head, and no man ever gave information against him. He travelled without disguise as a caballero, unarmed save and except his double-barrelled Joe Manton, a brace of pistols, and a dagger. He never came to grief; he had friends at court who got him out of all his scrapes, relatives in a high

position, we suspected, but could never find out who they were. He is now a captain of police. Government has given him an annuity for life and a free pardon to his band of forty men. Your honour knows this already; it happened last month.'

'I know all about it. I want you to tell me some anecdotes about him.'

'Anecdotes! they are as plentiful as blackberries; but you cannot believe one half of what people say. I will tell your honour two stories which I know to be true, having been present myself.

'The diligence from Madrid to Seville had been so frequently stopped by José Maria, that government considered it advisable to station a cavalry regiment near the pass where the road enters Andalusia. "I will show them," says José Maria to his forty men, "that they shall not make a fool of me." Whereupon one fine day he stopped the diligence just where the road turns before it faces the barracks. He threatened the guard and passengers with instant death if they spoke one word. He then turned the diligence into a defile where he obliged the passengers to alight.

José Maria was always most courteous and polite in his manner to ladies. He never opened their portmanteaux; he never obliged them to leave their seats. Seating his men in a circle round the diligence, he demanded a napoleon from each passenger. This was his usual practice. In the rotonde was a poor Punchinello player, who had not a sou.

'"I want a napoleon," says José Maria.

'"I never saw so large a sum in my life," replies the poor man.

'"You must earn it, then."

"How so?"

'"By playing to amuse those honourable gentlemen sitting round you smoking *puros* (not cigarettes)."

'The play over, José Maria threw a napoleon into the poor man's hat. "Who will follow a good example?" says he. Every one followed suit, giving a small contribution, which made the poor man happy for life. What do you think of that, señor? Would you not like to be José Maria?

'The diligence proceeded on its way. The passengers were so prepossessed in favour of José Maria, that when they passed the barracks they did not give information.

'Is not Spain a fine country, señor?'

'The Corregidor of Ronda had been robbed by one of José Maria's band. Hitherto he had taken no notice of José's depredations; to rob a corregidor was not to be passed over unnoticed. On the next market-day, which was the day appointed for the bull-fight, he put up placards, offering 100 dollars reward to any one who would bring him the head of José Maria. No sooner were the placards seen than they were torn down again, and in their places were posted bills offering a reward of 200 dollars for the head of the Corregidor. That was not all. While the bull-fight was going on, in marched José Maria and his forty men, armed to the teeth. The soldiers and police were there without their arms. All the entrances to the arena were in the hands of the robber chief.

'The people at first were terrified, but as no people in the world are so alive to the ridiculous as the Andalusians save and except the Irish, they all rose up and cheered José Maria and his forty men.'

Winding round the side of a hill, Ronda comes into view. While contemplating this ancient stronghold of the Moors, I hear behind me a shout, and see a dozen young men clad in the gay costume of Andalusia galloping up hill, waving in the air their broad sombreros, answered by shouts of welcome from the guide.

A lively conversation begins, not one word of which I could understand, until 'Sacco di noche,' caught my ear. 'Good-bye,' thinks I, 'to my carpet-bag and cigars;' but no, the guide shakes his head. 'Camisos di noche.' The conversation changes and becomes very animated; oaths, gesticulations, and a pantomimic representation of a fight. They say 'Adios,' wheel round, and dash down-hill at a breakneck pace.

'Is this a fête day at Ronda? Who are those gaily-pressed horsemen?'

'Old friends and companions in many a perilous adventure.'

'Contrabandistas?'

'Yes, your honour. Did you ever see a finer set of fellows in your life? Look how they gallop up-hill, where no horse in the world could find footing except an Andalusian!'

'What were they talking about?'

'A brush with the Guarda Costa. A mere trifle; a few men shot. But such a haul! Caramba, I wish I had been with them!'

I wish you were with them now, I thought, feeling anything but comfortable in such respectable society. Quite a mistake! He would have laid down his life for me, because I had given him a bundle of cigars to smoke during the night. Cigars win the heart of a Spaniard as whisky does that of an Irishman.

I spent one day in Ronda. At three o'clock next morning I was awakened by a tap at the door.

'The horses are saddled, señor; not a moment is to be lost. I have received information from my friends that robbers are waiting for you outside the town. We must get the start of them, or else you lose your bag, perhaps your life, or be carried away for ransom.'

'Make a bottle full of strong green tea; by the time the tea is made I shall be ready to start.'

Away we go for three hours, up hill and down dale, as fast as the little Andalusian horses could gallop. We stop at a venta, all danger of pursuit being now over. I drink my cold tea, lie down on the floor of the venta, and fall fast asleep; wake up quite refreshed, and continue the journey to Seville without meeting with any incident worth mentioning.

'Who next?'

'Bill.'

An Adventure on the Rigi.

Three friends were ascending the Rigi in the autumn of 1833. When half-way up the mountain, they observed a path, which they supposed to be a short cut.

'Let us try the path,' they say, 'and see where it leads to: who's afraid?'

Soon the path becomes very narrow, and so steep, that they find it necessary to pull themselves up by the branches of the trees. The path turns now to the left, along the side of the mountain, and after a little while diverges to the right, and terminates in a grass plot, or glade, surrounded by perpendicular cliffs, a spot well suited for the fairies to

hold their revels in; very picturesque, no doubt, but uncommonly awkward for travellers who have lost their way.

They retraced their steps from whence the path diverged, and by following the original direction, they struck upon another path, a foot broad, leading along the side of the perpendicular face of the mountain. There they stopped to hold a council of war. To go on was to fall over the cliff. To go back by the path they had climbed up was impossible. To remain where they were, was to perish miserably of hunger and cold. Seeing some peasants at work in the valley below, they shouted and screamed for a long time in vain.

At last, to their great delight, a peasant waved his hand, walked towards the mountain and disappeared. After waiting a long time in anxious suspense, they see him climbing up the perpendicular cliff.

'What brought you here?' says he, in an angry voice, as if he were some feudal lord, and they were trespassing upon his domain.

'Our legs,' they would have said under other circumstances; but they felt little inclined to chaff, feeling themselves entirely at his mercy.

'Lost our way.'

'Good. Put the palms of your right hands on the face of the cliff. Keep your eyes fixed on the cliff, step boldly forward, and follow me.'

After walking in this fashion for about one hundred yards, not daring to look down the perpendicular rock, they reached a cavern. In the cavern was a ladder, ascending which, they reached another cavern, in which was a similar ladder, which conducted them to a third cavern.

'Stop!' said their guide, 'until I open the door. Now come up.'

On emerging from the cavern they find themselves on the top of the Rigi.

'Gentlemen,' said the guide, 'I am a chamois-hunter; that path is known to very few sportsmen. Promise me not to tell our secret to any one!'

Shaking hands with the chamois-hunter, and giving him a five-franc piece, they bid him farewell.

'I wonder,' said one of the party, 'whether we could find the entrance to the cavern again? Let us go back and take some observations.'

On returning to the spot from whence they had emerged, for the life of them they could not find out where it was. How the orifice was concealed, whether by stones, brushwood, or otherwise, remains a mystery to the present day.

They promised the hunter never to reveal the secret to anyone, and now they impose the same obligation upon you.

'Can the girls wind up with stories from Egypt?'

'Yes, we can.'

'Fire away, then.'

The Caves of Abaddee in Upper Egypt.

In the year 1830, some peasants discovered a cavern on the top of a hill, two miles from the east bank of the Nile, in Upper Egypt, in which were buried mummied crocodiles.

A few years later, two Scotch travellers, having heard of the discovery, engaged two guides to conduct them to the caves.

The entrance was lofty, becoming gradually lower, until they came to a small water-course, which, having passed, the cavern became so low that they were obliged to crawl on their hands and feet. The foremost guide fell, and his torch was extinguished. The torch of the second guide went out. He fled, leaving the Scotchmen in the dark, to find their way out the best way they could.

Seeing a glimmer of light in the distance, they fortunately found an exit, and hurried away to their boat.

No sooner, however, were they on board, than they were arrested, brought before the Sheik of the village, and accused by the second guide of having murdered the first guide.

The Sheik, being a sensible man, considered the charge to be unfounded, and upon inquiring how they had murdered his companion, he said,—

'By sorcery! They are magicians!'

'That is quite sufficient,' said the Sheik, 'the accusation is absurd; but inasmuch as the poor man has left a widow and a large family, I would beg the travellers to make them a small present,' to which proposition they agreed, to the no small satisfaction of all parties present.

While this trial was going on, the whole village and the country round came pouring in, burning with curiosity to know what the trial was about, and among them came the first guide, who, no sooner had he seen the prisoners, than he called out, 'Sheik, the prisoners are not guilty; for here I am alive!' which declaration was received by the crowd with shouts of laughter.

Two years after this adventure of the Scotchmen, I

visited the caves. The peasants we found clothed in the linen taken from the crocodiles. It was in perfect preservation, although upwards of two thousand years old.

Having passed the watercourse, the cave became so low that we were obliged to crawl like serpents, hearing serpents hissing round about us. After creeping on in this manner for some time, we entered a large cavern, in which the crocodiles were stowed away like bales of cotton.

Selecting the largest, we returned. I gave it to the four guides to carry to the boat. They had not their burden long on their shoulders, when I heard them give a shout, throw down the crocodile, and run away. A serpent eight feet long, which had been concealed in the thatch, smelling the water of the Nile, darted out. I followed it, struck it a blow with the courbash, a whip made of hippopotamus hide, which broke its spine. The look it gave me of intense hatred I shall never forget.

The guides, seeing that the serpent was dead, ran back, joined hands, and danced round the serpent.

The Egyptians consider the killing a serpent the luckiest of omens.

A fair wind from the north sprang up immediately afterwards, which brought us to Karnak, the ancient capital of Egypt.

The crocodile I sent to the Royal Dublin Society. It was unrolled, and beneath its ear was found a loadstone, called by the Phenician mariners 'The Little Pointer.'

The Egyptians in Upper Egypt worshipped the crocodile. To embalm and entomb a crocodile was considered, like charity, to cover a multitude of sins.

Eastern Magic.

In January of the year 1838, Hill's Hotel, in Cairo, was crowded with travellers from all parts of the world; French, American, English, and Anglo-Indian, a steamer having just arrived at Suez from Bombay.

We had, staying in the hotel, Colonel Bretell, of the Engineers, who was, at that time, in the service of Mehemet Ali; the Consul of Jedda, Dr. Holroyd, who had just arrived from his exploration of the White Nile, and others. The topic of conversation at dinner was Eastern magic. All had read Lane's book on the Modern and Ancient Egyptians; but few had seen the magician.

After dinner, we adjourned to the sitting-room, a large, capacious, lofty apartment, at one end of which was the divan, formed of piles of cushions, which sank beneath your weight, allowing you to repose in Oriental indolence. Coffee was served round, and afterwards pipes, made of long cherry sticks, and clay bowls, filled with Latakia tobacco.

The magician is announced. An old Turk, who looked anything but a conjurer. (He was a Scotchman, but nobody at the time knew it.) The magician has had his pipe and coffee. A charcoal brazier is set before him. He sends for a young boy. There were plenty of them in the place before the hotel door, but not one now is to be found. A panic had seized them, and off they ran. What is to be done? Hill, the innkeeper, comes to our rescue.

'Ladies and gentlemen,' says he, 'I am sincerely sorry for your disappointment. I have a daughter who is of the age required for the exhibition, twelve years old. I shall be most happy that she shall take the place of the donkey boy.'

Hill's daughter was a very pretty, intelligent-looking child. This was not her first performance, so of course she knew her part to perfection. Having written on a slip of paper a charm, calling upon two familiar spirits, Tabashoon and Tarashoon, the clear-sighted, to descend with their forces, he threw the charm into the fire. He wrote a similar charm, which he put into his turban, and another he put into the child's cap. Putting some ink diluted with water into the palm of the child's hand, he asked her what she saw.

'I see a procession of flags of all the colours of the rainbow.'

'What next?'

'A tent is pitched.'

'Go on.'

'The Sultan has taken his seat inside.'

'What is he doing?'

'Smoking his pipe and drinking coffee.'

'Tell the Sultan to send for a messenger?'

'Has he come?'

'Yes.'

We ask for Daniel Lambert, the fattest man in England. The messenger departs, and brings an exceedingly thin man. The magician looks round the company with a triumphant air, as much as to say, 'Now are you not convinced that magic is a true science?' The messenger is sent again. A very fat man comes this time.

Suspecting that the magician had overheard our conversation, and supposing this to be a common experiment in mesmerism of thought-reading, I called the little girl over to me, and holding one of her hands, asked her to look into the ink.

She said she saw nothing, and looked awfully bored.

'Look again!'

'Yes. I see three baskets hanging in the air.'

'That will do,' I said. I had been thinking of the three Pyramids of Ghizeh, and considered the experiment to be a failure; but fancy my astonishment on reading next day in a book of travels the following remark: 'When the Pyramids of Ghizeh are seen at a distance, they appear like three baskets suspended in the air.'

A friend, who was an attaché at Constantinople, told me the following story.

'I was on a visit to a Turkish Aga, who lived near Aleppo. One day the subject of conversation happened to be Eastern magic.

'"I am going to Aleppo to-morrow on business. I shall send you a magician."

'The magician came. A tall, dark man, with a long pointed nose, brilliant eyes, jet-black beard, to all appearance a Persian.

'"Have you a young boy in the house?"

'"No."

'"Send for one."

'I sent my servant to fetch a young boy. I told him to go a long way off to find one, for I suspected a trick. The magician desired the boy to sit beside him on the divan, looked steadfastly at him for some time, while he chanted an incantation in an unknown tongue. The boy falls asleep.

'"Rise!" says the physician.

'The boy stands up.

'"Stretch out your arm!"

'He stretches it out. He puts a bason on the palm of

the boy's hand, fills the bason with water. The boy's arm does not move.

'The magician turns round to us, and asks what we wish the boy to find. All answer,—

'"The Aga's treasure."

'The boy walks up a flight of stairs. Fancying that he is pretending to be asleep, I give him a sound box on the ear. The magician was very indignant.

'"Had the boy awoke," he said, "he might have died in convulsions."

'The boy proceeded to the harem, the ladies' apartment. Here the procession stops. A deputation is sent to the ladies informing them of what was going on. Their curiosity overcame their sense of propriety. They open the door. The boy marches through the ladies' apartment, until he reaches the Aga's sanctum. Here he stops and puts down the bason.

'"How many feet below the surface is the treasure buried?" asks the magician.

'The boy walks ten steps.

'"Now let us put it to the proof," says Mr. Ross, "and dig up the treasure."

'This proposition was met by a decided refusal.'

The Desert of El Arish.

Leaving the land of the Hebrews, the rich land of Goshen, you enter the Desert of El Arish; from thence to the land of the Philistines, no fresh water can be procured. The journey through the desert occupies three days. The camels, the

'ships of the desert,' carry everything you have need of,—tents, luggage, joints of meat, fowls, wine, water, &c.

An hour before sunrise, you awake,—dress quickly. The servants light a charcoal fire on the sand, boil the kettle, make your breakfast, pack up your tent. It is wonderful how little time is lost in making these preparations. You have then an hour on hand before the Arabs have packed on the backs of the groaning camels the impediments of a caravan. The last operation is their own breakfast. Collecting the unconsumed charcoal of your fire, to which, if not sufficient, is added dry camel's dung, they bake on the glowing embers their unleavened bread. A skin is stretched on the sand, on which they knead the flour, give it the shape of cakes,—and behold their frugal meal. It tastes like what in Ireland we call 'fadge.' I used to exchange our beautiful white rolls for this unleavened bread, to the great surprise and delight of the Arabs.

The see-saw motion of camel-riding is rather agreeable at first, but soon it becomes exceedingly fatiguing, and after a long day's ride your back begins to ache,—such was my experience.

The next morning, the moment breakfast was over, I went to the camel-driver and asked him the line of march.

'There is the road, straight before you.'

'What road?'

'The high road.'

'I see nothing but sand, nearly quite flat with some wild shrubs growing here and there.'

'There it is, straight before you; so plain that I could follow it by night.'

I showed him a pocket-compass.

'Oh!' says he, 'I have seen that on board ship. I will give you the direction by compass.'

Off I started in great glee. I was not overtaken until midday, when a seat on a dromedary was not an unpleasant change.

One half-hour before sunset, we—those who had dromedaries—galloped off ahead, and chose a place on the sand for the night. Alighting from our dromedaries, we opened bottles of Hodson's India pale ale, which, of all things in the world, revives the strength and spirits after a long ride under an African sun. We then lit a fire, make coffee, light our long cherry-stick pipes, and feel happy. Meantime the caravan arrives. Tents are pitched, tea made,—go to bed very tired and sleepy. I feel something creeping under the blankets,—a snake, no doubt, crept under for warmth. Feeling too sleepy to get up, I begin to make mesmeric passes to put it to sleep, during which process I fall asleep. In the morning I had forgotten all about the snake, and if I had remembered it, would have thought it all a dream.

When the servants were packing up the beds, I heard an exclamation of surprise, and saw them rush out of the tent in chase of a centipede which they had found in my bed. It was four feet long. They said it was very venomous.

I start off by compass, lose my way and come upon signs of a recent encampment. In the distance I see a man on horseback. He gallops up to me. He has a very long gun slung to his saddle, and a scimitar hanging by his side. 'A clear case,' thinks I, 'of stand and deliver.' I pretend not to see him, and walk in another direction. He gallops round and faces me. Second thoughts—'I am a gone coon!' How fallacious are appearances! He came to tell me that I had lost my way; to show me in what direc-

tion was the caravan, pointing in exactly the opposite direction from which I came. Looking through a pocket telescope, I saw on the horizon a small caravan,—that is not our caravan. Never mind,—'any port in a storm.' Soon I came near enough to see through the telescope a dromedary, on the back of which was a pole, to the extremities of the pole were slung hammocks, the occupants of which had great-coats on, buttoned up to their eyes, and were fast asleep. Walking round the dromedary to see what they were like, I recognised a cousin, who I heard was travelling in the East. Seizing him by the hand, I upset the well-balanced hammock, and my friends rolled on the sand. Being suddenly wakened out of a deep sleep (for they had been travelling night and day), they looked quite bewildered and terrified, supposing that they were attacked by Bedouin Arabs, seeing me in the costume of a Turk. In half-an-hour our caravan arrived.

When we reached the land of the Philistines, we found the ground covered with locusts. Fried locusts for breakfast the next morning,—a meal by no means to be despised!

On Christmas-day the Lloyds and Llewellyns cast anchor in the bay.

After dinner, Captain Llewellyn gave us an account of their adventures, since the time they had left us.

CHAPTER VI.

RETURN HOME.

'After running before the gale for ten days, we were picked up by the emigrant ship *Kangaroo*, bound for Sydney, in Australia. On arriving at Sydney, we purchased a yacht of eighty tons burthen, and returned to Madeira. We made inquiries respecting the Coral Island. Nobody had ever heard of one. We steered due south, until we had come to what we supposed to be the distance we had run when scudding before the wind; and then we beat about until, on the morning of Christmas-day, the boy at the mast-head sang out the joyful news, "Land ahoy!" Deafening were the cheers we gave. So impatient were we to land, that we lowered one of the boats, and landed at the furthermost promontory. Seeing a house in the distance, we rushed up in hot haste, expecting to find the children there. Great was our disappointment and despair.'

'They have all died of starvation,' exclaimed Mrs. Llewellyn, bursting into a flood of tears.

'That is impossible, my dear,' remarked Mrs. Lloyd. 'Don't you see cocoa-nuts, birds, and vegetables?'

'Where on earth have my children gone to?'

This question was answered by a scream of delight from Mrs. Lloyd: 'I have found it!'

'What, my dear, have you found?'

'My dear child's journal.'

'Do read it out. What does it say?'

'"To-morrow we leave our experimental farm, to pass the rainy season in the cavern."'

'The cavern, my dear! What can the child mean? We saw no caverns.'

'You foolish old woman,' says Mrs. Lloyd, 'don't you recollect that we were wrecked upon a coral reef?'

'Oh! to be sure, I do. How stupid I am! Let us run off to the Coral Reef.'

After clambering down with great difficulty, we reached the mouth of the cavern, just in time to hear the conclusion of the hymn.

The next week was spent in making excursions over the island, in laying down plans for putting down the whole island under cultivation, and settling ourselves there for life; which plan would have been put into execution, had not Mrs. Llewellyn and Mrs. Lloyd declared that they must go home; that the fatigue and anxiety of mind which they had undergone, had so much injured their health, that they should die if they remained six months longer in a tropical climate.

'What shall we do with the island?' inquires Captain Llewellyn. 'It belongs to England, since we have been the first to hoist a flag upon it.'

'I don't think,' replies Mr. Lloyd, 'that the Portuguese will agree with you on that point. What says Captain George?'

'My opinion is that we ask Queen Mab.'

'Who is Queen Mab?' inquires Mrs. Llewellyn, with a look of astonishment, which set the young people off in roars of laughter.

'Your own daughter Lucy, mama.'

'Why, my dear, do they call you Queen Mab?'

'We will tell you that another time, mama.'

'Very well, my dear. Now let us have your opinion.'

Queen Mab, having laid her head on her shoulder for a few seconds, pronounced in a solemn voice, 'Sell it.'

This proposition was received with acclamation.

Next morning Mr. Lloyd sailed for Lisbon. He had an audience with our minister, who agreed with him that England would have nothing to say to it; that a representation might be made to the Portuguese government, to the effect that England could lay claim to it, and that having been put under cultivation, it had become a valuable property.

It was finally arranged that the Island of Esmeralda was to be purchased by the Portuguese from the Llewellyns and Lloyds for the sum of 200,000*l.*

On the 1st of April, 1836, the anniversary of the day on which we left Falmouth, we embarked on board the yacht, and sailed for Aberystwith. In the mountains behind Aberystwith, there is a lovely valley. In the middle of this valley is a small lake, well stocked with fish; the hills surrounding it are full of game. This valley was purchased by the Llewellyns and Lloyds for 200,000*l.* They divided the land between them.

On the 1st of January, 1840, when looking over the births, deaths, and marriages in the *Times* newspaper, I read to my great astonishment the following:—

'Married in Edinburgh, by the Rev. Thomas Arbuthnot, Lucy Llewellyn, eldest daughter of the late Captain Llewellyn, of Her Majesty's brig, *Firefly*, to Lord Arthur A——y, only son of the Earl of Phantom Castle, Ben Nevis.'

In the year 1847 I was still more surprised to read in the *Times*:—

'Married in Aberystwith, Wales, John and William Lloyd, to their cousins, the Misses Llewellyn, daughters of Captain Llewellyn, of Her Majesty's brig, *Firefly*.'

I wrote to congratulate Jack and his brother. The answer was characteristic of the man:—

'*Esmeralda Castle*,
'*Aberystwith*,
'*April* 1*st*, 1847.

'Dear Captain George,

A thousand and one thanks from all of us for your letter of congratulation. We are all well and too happy. We had a narrow escape of being the reverse, however, for we were very near losing our wives soon after our marriage. You remember how fond they were of laughing; well, would you believe it? During the honeymoon they kept up such an incessant giggle, that one of them got an attack of apoplexy and the other of hysterics, so that for many days their lives were despaired of. They are now, thank God, quite well, and send their loves to their dear old Captain George.

'Ever your affectionate friend,

'Jack.'

I was horrified one morning at seeing in the *Times* the following paragraph, copied from the *Bangor Express*.

'Fearful Mortality.—The small-pox has been raging for the last six months in Wales. It has spared neither young nor old. The families who have suffered the severest losses have been the gentry in the neighbourhood of

Aberystwith. Two of the oldest and most respectable families have died from this affliction. Mr. and Mrs. Llewellyn and their cousins, Mr. and Mrs. Lloyd.'

'*Esmeralda Castle,*
'*April* 1*st*, 1868.

'DEAR CAPTAIN GEORGE,

I regret to say that the sad news is too true. We are doubly a house of mourning; we have lost our children, and the other day we heard from Scotland of the death of dear Lucy's husband. His horse fell upon him when leaping a fence, and broke two of his thigh-bones. Everything which surgical skill could perform was exerted, but in vain; on the third day mortification set in; on the fourth day he was no more.

'Poor Lucy is inconsolable. We have asked her to come to us and unite her sorrow with ours, and spend the remainder of her life with us, to which proposition dear Lucy has consented. She is now one of our family, and a great consolation she is to us in our bereaved state.

'Ever, dear Captain George,
'Your most affectionate friend,
'JACK.'

Last year—no, by-the-bye, it was this year—I received the following letter from Jack:—

'*Esmeralda Castle,*
'*May* 1*st*, 1868.

'DEAR CAPTAIN GEORGE,

It is wonderful how time assuages grief. We thought that we never could have recovered from the

effect of our losses, and I think we never could, if it had not been for dear Lucy's coming to live with us. We have lost the high spirits which we used to enjoy when you knew us in the olden time, but, somehow or another (youth, they say, is very elastic), we are beginning to regain our former state of high spirits. Do come next autumn, Captain George, to see us. We will build up the boat, the cart, and the house, and act Giant as of old.

'By-the-bye, I forgot to say that, in consequence of Lucy's ill health, we intend to go to the Island of Esmeralda, in my new yacht of 100 tons burden. Won't you come? We can't go without you. Don't say no. Mind, 1st July, 1868.

'Ever your most affectionate friend,

'JACK.